

Nazarbayev University, Graduate School of Public Policy  
Institutional Research Ethics Committee (IREC)

**NU GSPP GUIDELINES FOR OBTAINING IREC APPROVAL  
FOR CONDUCTING HUMAN SUBJECT RESEARCH**

Nazarbayev University (NU) Graduate School of Public Policy (GSPP) is committed to the ethical approach to human subjects in research. All investigators, whether staff, students, or faculty are required to adhere to university policies and ethical principles when conducting human subject research.

Research involving human subjects conducted by personnel affiliated with Nazarbayev University must be reviewed and approved by the relevant IREC Committee at Nazarbayev University prior to research activities being initiated. There are two types of Committees that are responsible for oversight of research projects with animals and humans:

**At University-level**, Institutional Research Ethics Committee (IREC) is a constant body overseen by Research Council, which is responsible for oversight of ethical standards while conducting human subject research at the University.

**At the School-level**, IREC has the status of “subcommittee” and is responsible for oversight of ethical standards while conducting human subject research by researchers at the School. GSPP has its own IREC, which reviews applications from students conducting fieldwork for their PAE and other research projects.

NU Ethics regulations provide for two types of IREC review: **full-board and expedited**. Studies that involve **more than minimal risk** to subjects require **full board review** by NU IREC. **Expedited review** applies to those research projects that do not fit an exempt category but do **not present more than minimal risk to subjects**. Criteria for defining the risk levels of your study can be found in NU IREC Handbook (hereafter NU IREC Handbook). A school-level IREC can review applications for expedited review.

These guidelines were composed based on: NU IREC Handbook: A Guide to Conducting Human Subject Research. All GSPP IREC applicants must read this Handbook prior to applying for school IREC expedited review.

## **GSPP IREC GUIDELINES AND REQUIREMENTS**

The mission of the Committee is to monitor the research projects of the faculty members, employees and students of the University involved in conducting human subject research, in order to verify compliance with ethical standards and their compliance with:

- 1) International standards of research ethics while conducting human subject research;
- 2) University rules and procedures for conducting human subject research.

The list of requirements for submission of application to GSPP IREC:

**1). IREC protocol form**, additional information and forms may be found on the Nazarbayev University Institutional Research Ethics Committee website:

<https://nu.edu.kz/about-us/institutional-research-ethics-committee>

Locating the page: Main page -> Research -> Institutional Research Ethics Committee

**2) Consent Form** in English and in the language of communication with research subjects. The informed consent process is a central element of the ethical treatment of human research subjects. During this process the investigator informs the potential participant about the research as well as any possible risks or benefits associated with it. The goal is to ensure prospective participants have all of the information they need in order to make an informed decision about whether or not they would like to participate in the study. Investigators must be forthright and realistic when describing the benefits and risks of research participation and when answering questions posed by subjects. For sample consent documents, please refer Nazarbayev University's Informed Consent Template documents which are available on Research ethics website or in Appendices B, C, and D of NU IREC Handbook.

**3). CITI Training** certificate or any other relevant certificate, which shows that you passed a course on human ethics subjects.

NU requires its ethics committee members, principle investigators, and all participating staff to complete the relevant Collaborative Institutional Training Institute (CITI) web-based training program. Access the CITI training and click on “New Users Register Here”; this will take you to the Course Registration page. Select “Nazarbayev University” from the dropdown list of Participating Institutions. Enter your name and NU issued email address for CITI training. Once you have provided the registration information, you’ll be led through a series of screening questions to determine which training modules are appropriate for your specific research program.

NOTE: If you have recently completed CITI training at a different institution, you can add NU as a participating institution to transfer your training credit. Follow the instructions on the CITI site for adding an additional institution and changing your Username and Preferred Email. If you have completed ethics training that you think may substitute for completing the CITI program please provide a record of your training to the Central Research Office for consideration.

**3) Any relevant documents to the project:** draft interview questions, questionnaires, survey materials in English and in the official language(s) of the country, where the project will be held.

## SUBMITTING APPLICATION FOR EXPEDITED REVIEW TO GSPP IREC

### How to submit IREC application?

Applications must be submitted by sending your forms and supporting documents to [gspp\\_irec@nu.edu.kz](mailto:gspp_irec@nu.edu.kz).

### When to submit IREC application?

15<sup>th</sup> day of each month is a closing date for students' ethical review applications for each subsequent monthly IREC meeting. We recommend students to submit applications well in advance (at least 5-6 weeks) before the start of their fieldwork.

### Who will review my IREC application?

Expedited review applications will be reviewed by the current members of the GSPP IREC Committee Dr.Iftikhar Lodhi and Dr.Serik Orazgaliyev.

The IREC is charged with reviewing research projects involving human subjects for compliance with institutional policies. The IREC will also assess whether the risks posed to research subjects are proportional to the benefits that may be derived. The IREC functions as a surrogate "human subject advocate" whose role is to protect subjects participating in research by reviewing research projects before research is allowed to begin.

### What happens next?

You will be notified on the outcome of you application **within one calendar month** after submitting your application.

The IREC has the authority to approve, require changes to study procedures, or disapprove proposed research projects. Institutional officials can disapprove an IREC approved project but cannot approve a project that has been disapproved, suspended, or terminated by the IREC.

## **Approval Period and Continuing Review of Research by the IREC**

IREC project approval for research is valid for a maximum period of 12 months. If the research is planned to continue for more than a year, a renewal application (also called a continuing review or application) must be submitted to the IREC to extend approval for an additional year.

## **Reporting Adverse Events and Unanticipated Problems Involving Risk to Subjects or Others**

Unanticipated Problems are unexpected events related or possibly related to the research that places subjects or others at a greater risk of physical or psychological harm. These unanticipated events must be reported promptly in accordance with IREC policy using the Reportable Events Form which is available in Appendix H of NU IREC Handbook. For more information on reportable events please see Chapter VIII of the Handbook.

### **Additional information and contact details:**

Additional information and educational materials including School and University IREC Bylaws and Procedures may be found on the Nazarbayev University Institutional Research Ethics Committee website:

<https://nu.edu.kz/about-us/institutional-research-ethics-committee>

If you have any questions regarding IREC application procedures, please email GSPP IREC Secretary Madina Lukpanova [mlukpanova@nu.edu.kz](mailto:mlukpanova@nu.edu.kz).

If you have matters to discuss prior to submitting the application (e.g. if you are not sure about risks related to your research) you may contact GSPP IREC members Dr.Iftikhar Lodhi ([iftikhar.lodhi@nu.edu.kz](mailto:iftikhar.lodhi@nu.edu.kz)) or Dr.Serik Orazgaliyev ([serik.orazgaliyev@nu.edu.kz](mailto:serik.orazgaliyev@nu.edu.kz)).